



# THE ACOLYTE

# THE ACOLYTE

AN AMATEUR MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENTIFICTION

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Vol. III, No. 23

Summer -- 1945

Whole No. 11

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The Acolyte is published quarterly; appearing on the 15th of January, April, July, and October. Subscription rates: 15¢ per copy, or four issues for 50¢. Other amateur publications may exchange subscriptions with us, provided they first make arrangements with editor Laney. This is an amateur and non-profit publication, and no payment is made for accepted material, other than a copy of the issue in which it appears. Accepted material is subject to editorial revision when necessary. The editors are not responsible for disputes arising from advertising contained herein.  
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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

### THE PERDUE HISTORY.

Since writing and stencilling the foreword to this opus, we have discovered that the original estimate of its bulk must be revised upward drastically. A minimum of 250 to 300 pages will be required to present what we now have, without counting addenda. At 8 to 10 pages per issue, this history is going to require close to a decade to publish, a decade during which The Acolyte is going to be definitely restricted in other respects. There is some question in our minds if the magazine will last that long. There is also a growing question if this material is of sufficient interest to enough of our readers to warrant the use of this much space for it. Will the readers please speak? Send us a postal today, indicating if you want to see the rest of this history; if you would rather see it than material of the type we have previously published. Our final decision will rest on your response.

FTL/SDR

---ooOoo---

### FAN DEALERS.

In connection with our new crusade (see p. 27) for reasonable prices for fantastic books and magazines, we do not wish to be misunderstood. For the isolated, small-town fan especially, the fan dealer renders a genuine service. It is only when he abuses his position that we have any objection to him.

But little out-of-print fantasy is in sufficient demand to warrant a professional mail order bookseller's including it in his catalog. Thus the fan who is willing to take the time and trouble to procure duplicates is wellnigh the only source of supply for many collectors. His prices, obviously, are going to be considerably higher than those obtaining in over-the-counter sales in book and magazine stores. Not only does he buy most if not all his stock at retail, but the amount of time and sheer hard work necessary to assemble such a stock and keep it reasonably complete certainly deserves some sort of recompense. It must be remembered that the fan dealer is doing all this in his spare time. I know of a local magazine store where I could get an 80% complete file of Astounding in virtually new condition for 10¢-25¢ a copy. But for me to make the 8 mile drive out there and back, spend the two or three hours needed to sort the magazines out of the shelves, package the stuff, and haul it down to the express office; I'd need a minimum net profit of \$20.00. For such a sum, I could buy for my own collection enough choice stuff I couldn't afford otherwise that I might go to this much trouble for someone. But I certainly wouldn't think in terms of a mere 25% markup. Neither would the fan dealer. On the other hand there certainly is a definite ceiling beyond which he should not go.

We shall continue to give as much information as we can on material available at cost from the publishers. In addition, we hope in time to build up an acceptable code of standard prices, at least for the more popular items. We have been promised the fullest cooperation by Forrest J. Ackerman, whose "Weaver Wright" advertisements many of you have patronized. We should like cooperation, comments, and suggestions from all other fan dealers and fans. Stamp collectors have a standard catalog with standard prices, why can't we have one? FTL

---ooOoo---

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

We received a great deal of help on the last issue, and at this time would like to extend thanks to Elmer Perdue for printing the title on the cover; Mel Brown and Gerry Hewitt for mimeographing the bulk of the issue; and the two last named and James Hummel for assembling and stapling it. And if you think the paper was too thin and sleazy, you should have seen the seven reams we had to throw away!

FTL/SDR

# CRITERIA for CRITICISM:

## THE PRELIMINARY TO A SURVEY

by Francis T. Laney

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The purpose of this essay is to set down in preliminary form a few notes on one or two of the factors upon which one may logically judge the literary merits of a fantastic story. Needless to say, these notes reflect the views of the author alone, and are not necessarily those of other members of The Acolyte staff. In an opinionative subject such as this, there is room for a wide divergence of opinions, and it is hoped that any differing with the present article will submit rebuttals and/or amplifying articles. The pages of this magazine are wide open for such purpose.

THE GENERAL PURPOSE OF FICTION. Every book which has ever been written represents the fulfillment of some underlying purpose on the part of the author. Every good book represents to a greater or lesser degree the fulfillment of some purpose other than the mere cashing of royalty checks. There is something of artistic attainment, of propagating a philosophy, of disseminating new information, or of some other non-commercial purpose. If his end result is to be worth reading, the author is not merely beating out so many words a minute at so much a word; while of course he must make a living, there is nevertheless a certain pride in achievement which has very little relationship to the cash aspect.

In the case of all fiction, the basic purpose is, must be, to entertain the reader. If the reader has not been entertained, the book is a failure. This purpose of entertainment is not completely incompatible with certain axe-grinding intentions on the part of the author. Without vitiating his prime purpose of entertainment, he can, and often does, weave all manner of propaganda of one kind and another into the threads of his story. If this be done skillfully enough, the reader is not especially conscious of it; though his subconscious may lap it up, the entertainment value of the story has not suffered. When, however, any ulterior purposes are so poorly disguised that they impinge on the reader's consciousness, the story has been marred. An excellent example of the crudest type of propaganda story is Uncle Tom's Cabin, in which the story, such as it is, is no more than a roughly fitting shell, tossed on as a sugar-coating for the essay on social reform which Mrs. Stowe felt would have a wider appeal as fiction. This story may well be contrasted with Grapes of Wrath, which is absolutely nothing but story. Though not once did John Steinbeck forget he was writing a story, not once did he lapse into the rantings of the reformer, the book was one of the most potent weapons of social reform in its decade, a tribute to the artistic power and restraint with which Steinbeck handled his theme.

THE NON-ENTERTAINMENT RESIDUE. The prophetic, philosophic, and Utopian nature of much science-fiction makes acceptable a considerably larger proportion of what might be termed non-entertainment purposes than would be palatable in mundane fiction. In a story of the far future, or one laid in any other fantastic environment, it is patent that the civilization depicted will be almost exclusively the brain-child of the author, and can hardly escape from being strongly tainted with his beliefs and philosophy. Aldous Huxley, in A Brave New World, in addition to propagandizing unabashedly for the abolition of sexual



tabus, finds frequent occasions to satirize modern big business and industrialism and in addition shows sharply the less pleasant features of living under a dictatorship. The earlier portion of Starmaker in describing the world of life analogous to our own certainly leaves one a clear picture of Dr. Stapledon's likes and dislikes as related to present-day society. Nearly any fantasy by S. Fowler Wright contains a noticeable amount of propagandizing against the machine age, especially against automobiles, and much not too subtle yearning for the pastoral life of Elizabethan England. In none of these instances do we find the stories damaged by these intrusions--in most cases, indeed, these additions enhance the overall excellence of the novel in question--because the author in question has tried, first and foremost, to write a good, entertaining story. John Cowper Powys' Morwyn, on the other hand, is a prime example of a tremendously powerful atmospheric fantasy virtually ruined by a lack of restraint in the handling of the non-entertainment residue. The anti-vivisection propaganda descends virtually to the level of incoherent raving, and its frequent recurrence seriously interferes with the flow of the story, to say nothing of irritating the reader by its excessive intemperance.

The handling of the non-entertainment residue is unquestionably one of the most revealing indications of an author's ability as a writer. Whenever he touches on it, he is jitter-bugging on eggs, and very few ineptnesses here will ruin an otherwise acceptable story.

At this point, it might be well to interject a statement that in many types of science-fiction the non-entertainment residue is the crux of the entire book. It certainly is legitimate, for example, for an author to attempt to show his interpretation of what life might reasonably be like "if" something happened. He may do as S. Fowler Wright in The New Gods Lead, and attempt to show the end results if certain present-day trends are carried to their logical conclusions. Brown and Serpell, in Loss of Eden (Faber & Faber, 1940), wrote of a Britain which had made a negotiated peace with Hitler. George Allan England made in The Golden Blight an attempt to show the reactions of a powerful oligarchy confronted with the complete erasure of the basis of their financial structure. The thoughtful reader can doubtless call to mind scores of similar examples. In any of these cases, the author cannot well show the results of his "if" without reflecting strongly his own beliefs and philosophy concerning the matter. Indeed, without this non-entertainment residue, the work will lose severely in plausibility and strength. A case in point is Woman Alive by Susan Ertz. This story deals with the destruction of virtually all female life through the military use of a potent virus. One woman is finally found alive, and the denouement deals with the conflicts and actions incidental to her becoming the Mother of the Race. The author's apparently complete lack of convictions along sociological lines results in a lifeless, almost mechanical narrative; a faint shadow of what we would have had if Wright or Huxley had handled this theme.

Pure fantasy and weird fiction cannot, in the opinion of this writer, contain any noticeable amount of non-entertainment residue and still retain any claim to attention. The outstanding examples of its erroneous inclusion may be found in the vast body of so-called "occult" fiction, in which the chief aim, apparently, is to "prove" the existence of ghosts, table-rappings, spirit communications, and all the other psychic phenomena beloved of mediums and oranks. A well-known writer of this type of story is L. Adams Beck, who is responsible for several volumes of moderately well-written short stories. (This field is also notorious for the extremely cheap type of writing generally found in it, and one's judgement is apt to be colored by this intrinsic lack of quality.) In the tales contained in Beck's The Opener of the

May, one is struck by the extremely matter-of-fact, lackadaisical way in which the ghosts and similar characters are introduced. The reader is never quite certain if a character in question is dead or alive, for the ghosts lack all indications of the supernatural. Such pap may be thrilling reading for Great-aunt Elizabeth, who feels her time drawing to a close and wants some assurance that she can flit about for a few millenia as a disembodied spirit; it can scarcely be recommended to the fantasy fan, or even to the casual reader in search of entertainment.

Surely no man could be imagined with stronger or more definite beliefs than H. P. Lovecraft, yet where in his stories will one find any appreciable amount of non-entertainment residue? The nearest thing to it is the way in which the materialism of his personal philosophy finds expression in the semi-satiric treatment of religious themes, but never does Lovecraft advocate this materialism, in the manner of a propagandist. It appears only in the actual *modus operandi* of the story development, and in such way that the mention of it in this article is no more than an extrapolation based on separate knowledge of the man.

It is highly doubtful if any modern master of weird or pure fantasy has imbued any of his stories with non-entertainment residue, and if such cases exist, they will be found in the more obscure portion of the author's output. No matter how different in approach, style, or technique, the works of these men will have the one common denominator; they will prove to have been written solely for entertainment.

**WRITER MOTIVATIONS.** We will grant, then, for purposes of argument at least, that the prime purpose of fantastic fiction is reader entertainment, and that any transgression of the bounds of good taste in handling the non-entertainment residue can only disrupt or even ruin the story. But it seems obvious that the author can have a large number of different secondary objectives in writing, even while adhering strictly to this chief object of entertainment. It might be of passing interest to examine a few of these.

One of the commonest purposes of a fantasy is the creation of some specific mood, usually that of horror. Practically all successful weird stories may be classed primarily as horror-evokers. Other moods of course may be created. What might, for want of a better term, be called a mood of "fantastic, other-worldly beauty" is frequently found in the work of Lord Dunsany, Clark Ashton Smith, and H. P. Lovecraft, among others. An excellent example is Lovecraft's The Quest of Iranon, a fragile bit of verbal music. A mood of hero worship, often blended subtly with weird horror, may be found in many stories. Robert E. Howard's Conan series is probably the outstanding example of this type; others in the genre include E. Hoffman Price's Bayonne stories and the Grey Mouser series of Fritz Leiber, Jr. Such stories as Clark Ashton Smith's The Double Shadow, or The Seven Geases, may well be said to evoke a mood of alienation, of outre other-worldliness, in addition to their primary horror. Writing under the Don Stuart pseudonym, John W. Campbell, Jr. does a masterful job of limning a mood of hopeless, black futility and pessimism in such tales as Twilight and Night. Other moods can doubtless be thought of, but these few examples suffice to give an idea of the variety of moods capable of being developed as the secondary objective of a piece of fantastic writing.

Practically every piece of fiction evokes a variety of moods as one progresses through it; however for a story to be classed primarily as a mood piece, it is necessary that the evocation of this particular mood or blend of moods be the apparent chief aim of the tale. This type of story is almost invariably short, 10,000 words or less, since the mood can generally be built up in a comparatively short space, and further wordage is not only superfluous, but actually detracts from the mood itself.

Another frequent secondary motivation is found in much of the very best science-fiction yet written. The author postulates some fantastic happening or group of happenings, then proceeds to depict realistically just how people would behave under these artificially set-up conditions. A wide variety of postulations have been developed in this manner. One of the very best of this type is Deluge (and its companion volume, Dawn) by S. Fowler Wright, wherein the author imagines that virtually the entire earth is flooded by the sea, then graphically follows the lives of a handful of survivors in an unflooded bit of England. Close to these in quality is D. E. Stevenson's gripping A World in Spell, in which Earth's population is wiped out, save for a handful of people in a trans-Atlantic strato-clipper. Herbert Best's The Twenty-Fifth Hour postulates a world war in which mutual destructiveness brings about a complete collapse of civilization, and follows the handful of survivors in their drift towards savagery. Similar to this last, and of almost equal quality is L. Ron Hubbard's Final Blackout. The previously mentioned Woman Alive is one of the lesser ranking items in this classification, as are a vast number of the earlier pulp science-fiction tales. Among the best of these last might be mentioned the Balmer and Wylie pair, When Worlds Collide and After Worlds Collide. It should be noted, however, that extremely few of these earlier pulp sf yarns meet acceptable literary standards.

One of the most fascinating of all secondary motivations is that of elaborate "histories" of the future, a field which has as yet just barely been touched. In this type, the author painstakingly draws up a "history" of coming centuries and millenia, basing it carefully on the present, and uses this outline as a guide for a group or series of related or semi-related stories. It is easy to see that such a project will gain vastly in verisimilitude over the more conventional "future" tale, since the building up of the background is carried on uninterruptedly in all of the component stories, and in addition the author has his "facts" much more firmly fixed in his own mind than he could otherwise. The chief exponent, and perhaps originator, of this method is Robert Heinlein, all of whose stories published under his own name fit into his history somewhere. (A portion of the chart on which Heinlein's stories are based appeared in the May 1941 issue of Astounding Science-Fiction.) It is deeply to be regretted that none of Heinlein's major work has as yet achieved the dignity and permanence of hard covers, but is scattered through the ephemeral files of a pulp magazine. Other writers have made more or less use of a similar technique, notably A. E. van Vogt in his series dealing with the Isher Empire (Weapon Shop group) and Isaac Asimov in his "Foundation" series. But Heinlein stands alone as the one author who has written a sizeable group of unrelated stories covering episodes in several thousand years of the same future.

Closely related to the Heinlein method is the more conventional "history" of the future. In these stories we almost never find a group larger than a trilogy of novels, and usually just the single novel dealing with some particular aspect of some particular future. A large number of stories fall into this classification, including a heavy majority of the more worthwhile magazine efforts. Outstanding as an example is W. Olaf Stapledon's unsurpassable trilogy: Last Men in London, Last and First Men, and Starmaker.

Most of the secondary motivations in scientifiction itself might logically be classified under future "history". Certainly such things as interplanetary and interstellar flight, atomic power, and extrapolations in virtually any science are almost invariably placed in future time, and are usually incidents of stories whose chief purpose seems to be the portrayal of a bit of history-that-has-not-yet-happened.

Time travel does not necessarily come under this heading.

If used in the more conventional way, as by Wells in The Time Machine, it is no more than a narrative device to carry the reader into some other time to follow the events of some pseudo-history. If, however, the time travel becomes an end in itself, we find a peculiar type of story which bears the same relation to ordinary scientification as the typical modern detective story bears to a study in murder such as Mrs. Lowndes' The Lodger. A time-travel tale such as Anson MacDonald's By His Bootstraps is nothing more nor less than an intellectual puzzle in narrative form. Many of the stories written for Astounding Science-Fiction under the aegis of John W. Campbell, Jr. are no more than puzzles, pure and simple--many of them unsolvable. While this is as yet an experimental form of fantasy, it is a type of secondary motivation which should probably be mentioned here.

Utopia stories are of course a narrow form of future history, and probably are by far the oldest. This is a type of scientification that leaves a great deal to be desired unless one is an out-and-out escapapist. By the very definition of the word, a Utopia story can be little else than a roseate and improbable day dream, and makes pretty wishy-washy reading for the realist who likes to peruse a plausible and logically developed piece of fiction. Another characteristic flaw of the Utopia story is the frequency with which the author abuses his non-entertainment residue, as contrasted with other forms of fantasy. The Utopia theme seems to be the chief one to occur to the crackpot and reformer who has some "social message" to deliver and decides to do so fictionally. Of Utopia stories written during the past century Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward is probably the most famous, but it suffers exceedingly both from its extreme lack of realism and from the author's lamentable ignorance of so many of the topics he discusses. In order to formulate a satisfactory extrapolation, it is necessary to have a working knowledge of the subject at hand, so as to keep the results reasonably unified and logical. The contempt for cold facts which so often moves hand in hand with lofty idealism is an insufficient qualification for acceptable prophetic writing. The broad field of future fiction contains many semi-Utopian stories, but careful analysis of most of them will show that these apparently ideal future civilizations have their good and bad points just the same as does our actual one. Any such tale would scarcely classify as a Utopia story.

The superman theme may well be considered as a separate secondary motivation for writing fantasy. An attempt to depict the biological future of the race, the evolution or mutation of *Homo Sapiens*, is perhaps the most lofty of all scientifictional aims. At least four outstanding pieces of literature based on this theme have appeared: J. D. Beresford's The Hampdenshire Wonder (in some editions titled simply, The Wonder), W. Olaf Stapledon's Odd John, Stanley G. Weinbaum's The New Adam, and A. E. van Vogt's Slan. Though these four are all well-nigh above criticism, it seems likely that the superman story has not yet been written. The portions of biology and psychology upon which such stories depend are so relatively new and undeveloped, and their general public acceptance is so much more hampered by the prejudices stemming from disproved and out-moded religions and theologies than is the case of the physical sciences that one can logically expect much greater advances in these fields in the future, with a corresponding advance in fiction based upon them.

Definitely acceptable as a writer's secondary motivation is the desire to hold up to ridicule some phase or phases of our civilization. Much of the most exciting fantasy written is of a satiric nature, for the possibility of presenting a warped, exaggerated, sarcastic, yet recognizable picture or allegory of ordinary life is fascinatingly irresistible. Acceptable stories in this group may range from

the side-splitting satire of Owen Johnson's The Coming of the Amazons to the tender sardonicism of Hope Mirrlees' unforgettable Lud-in-the-Mist (which last, incidentally, is one of the very best pure fantasies I have yet had the pleasure of reading).

Of perhaps lower artistic stature than genuine satire is unadorned humor. Humor in fantasy, to my mind, is wellnigh the least acceptable of any secondary motivations. This is not to deny the very genuine place in general literature of humor; it is merely to state that so-called fantastic humor seems of questionable value except, perhaps, for occasional bits worked now and then into serious stories. At this moment, no piece of all-out fantastic humor comes to mind which approaches the quality of stories cited as examples elsewhere in this article. Perhaps this is partly due to definition. Thorne Smith, for example, is satiric fantasy throughout, with frequent interludes of all-out slapstick. L. Sprague de Camp is frequently admired as a writer of humorous fantasy, but an analytical reading of such masterpieces as The Land of Unreason or The Incomplete Enchanter leaves little justification for listing them as other than serious fantasy. It is true that each of these writers has an exquisite knack of limning fantastically absurd and amusing incidents which abound in all their stories, but these are incidents rather than being the chief components of the stories themselves. John Kendrick Bangs wrote many volumes of humor, both fantastic and mundane, in the 1890's, but the writing style unfortunately dates these tales badly. A. M. Phillips' The Mislaid Charm is the best available example of fantasy humor, and it suffers exceedingly by comparison with Thorne Smith, to whom its author owes a great deal. Since it is a blend of Smith's fantastic plots and mundane slapstick incidents without Smith's subtle and delightful satire, it seems rather emasculated by comparison. A whole article might well be devoted to the place of humor in fantasy; perhaps I am dismissing it too curtly. But it seems to me that in a branch of literature devoted to soaring ideals, brilliant imagination, powerful mood creation, prophecy of the future, and similar lofty topics mere laughter for laughter's sake is out of place. Furthermore it is wellnigh impossible to find any humor, even in fantastic settings, which does not owe its power of amusement solely to mundane factors. For these reasons, I tend to object to fantasy humor, always differentiating between mere humor and genuine satire.

This extremely sketchy outline of secondary writing motivations is far from complete. The vast ramifications of the fantasy field would necessitate a large and complex volume to give an adequate critical discussion of them, especially if comprehensively documented. The present article is intended only to scratch the surface, so as to speak, and give The Acolyte's readers some bones to chew on, with the hope that some of them may find themselves moved to give their views on the matter.

And, it seems to me, any discussion arising from this article should be of considerably more importance to fantasy fans than mere bullfisting. All of us are constantly passing judgement on the stories we read, frequently by intuition alone. The field needs a generally acceptable list of criteria, against which we can measure any given piece of fantasy and say with reasonable assurance that it is, or is not, acceptable. If this article provokes the writing of any rebuttals or amplifications which in turn prove to be foundational contributions to such a list of criteria, its purpose will have been more than fulfilled.

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In the event a rubber-stamped "JUL 15" appears to the left of this paragraph, it indicates that your subscription has expired. No other notice will be sent.

HERITAGE

Now the poet was old, and he knew that his days on earth were numbered. So when he heard a soft knock at the door and glimpsed his tall, gray visitor he knew him.

They went out together and down the narrow street, threading their way through busy, unheeding crowds. Death talked pleasantly, and the poet was content to listen.

"There is my companion for tomorrow," Death nodded towards a bent old man on the opposite side. "And yonder..." a skeletal finger pointed at a young girl, face pinched with want and toil, who peered into a grimy shop window, "my tryst with her is but three days off."

The poet pursed his lips grimly but said nothing.

Now they had passed through the town and were out in the open country. And lo, as they journeyed amid the tall grass of a meadow a youth passed them. His little curls were crowned with laurel and his face was fair and frank to see. A tiny piping voice rose in sweet notes of gladness.

Death scowled visibly and averted his eyes, and the poet smiled gently. "There goes one you will never accompany," he said, "There goes my child."

And the twain wended their way, while the infant song skipped and danced and laughed at the bees and the nodding flowers.

---oOo---

THE BELLE OF THE BALL

As I came into the ballroom soft music floated forward to greet me. The swirl of dancers under the gleaming chandeliers, the rustle of silk dresses, the gay, tinkling laughter, had all the enchantment of some rare and remote fairyland.

One I saw who laughed and flirted more than the rest. Very fair she was to look upon, and beaux fought to pay her attentions. Yet I fancied the ripple of her amusement as she taunted her admirers had the malice of mockery and I thought the smile on her painted face false.

So I turned to one who sat near the door unnoticed. "Who is that creature so fair, who is attracting all the attention?"

My companion's voice was low and quiet, and pain lurked in its depths. "She is called Flattery."

The eyes that looked into mine had so direct a gaze that my own dropped in confusion. "I know her well. I am her cousin Truth."

---oOo---

RELEASE

In a hidden, cobwebbed corner I found the book. It was mouldy with age, and dampness had gnawed at the covers, and mildew had trampled carelessly across the pages. Yet when I opened the volume a host of gauzy iridescent dreams flew out. I read absorbed, and the cavalcade, the winged visions of forgotten poets, fluttered in clouds about my head.

And after many hours, my parents found the book and I. Scornfully they tossed the tattered volume into the fire, though I begged and pleaded.

As I lay in my bed, and a tear ran down my cheek, a little winged dream tiptoed to my shoulder. "We will never leave you," he comforted. "You have set us free, and we will follow wherever you go. Down the corridor of years, through the doorways of experience, our legions shall abide with you." And he soared upwards with his fellows, the golden wings beating about my head.



(Note: This article is based on Mr. Gibson's library and bookshop excursions while serving in Italy with the Canadian Army. FTL)  
-oOo-

There are, or have been, definite schools of science-fiction and fantasy in Italy. But almost, perhaps quite, without exception, the stories are old or juvenile, or both. It seems that imaginary depictions of ideal states did not flourish much under the Fascists, the two of the first books reprinted after Mussolini's rise to power were La Nuova Atlantide by Bacone and Campanella's La Citta del Sole. Like almost all Italian books of the past twenty-odd years, they were paper bound.

Mussolini evidently did not frown on the idea of interplanetary journeys. I have three non-fiction works with spaceships portrayed on the covers. Pictorially, the best is the scene on Il Libro del Cielo by Guiseppe Scortecchi, one of a series called "The Golden Ladder" and designed for the very young. It shows the vessel taking off from an imposing launching cradle. E. Roggero's Ennima della Scienza Moderna: Realti di Domani shows it leaving a structure vaguely resembling a skeleton ski-jump in the middle of a city. The take-off must have jarred the huge ugly skyscrapers that crowded about the ramp! The third is by "Yambo"--of whom more later--who illustrated his own writings. Si Puo Andare Nella Luna contains an essay on the possibility of reaching the moon, and gives reviews of books by Eyraud, H. G. Wells, and Yambo himself. Another spaceship adorns the cover of M. Ciampi's Marionette nella Luna, a very light, reputedly humorous operetta.

There are numerous fantasy or science-fiction books translated from foreign languages: English, French, German, and some Slavic tongue. Wells and Doyle, Jean de la Hire, Comte Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Jean de Quirielle, Jules Verne, Camille Flammarion, Edmond Flegg, Roberts Kalmann, Bernhardt Kellermann, N. Muhanoff, and many more.

Apparently the most prolific Italian author of fantasy is "Yambo", Enrico Novelli, whose works were still being reprinted just before the war. Italian books run to small editions which are replaced as required, frequently by other companies, but Yambo's were almost all put out by one firm. Enquiries in many bookshops had results that varied uniformly with the age of the attendant: "The well-known writer" or "The great humorist" from the elderly, "The writer for boys" or "... children" from the middle-aged, and a blank stare from the young. Yet Yambo was still writing in the 30's, and is among the few accorded the distinction of hard-shelled editions in recent years. Many of his books are fantasies or sf, and many more contain traces of it. I do not think he was a very original writer--too many of his books parallel well-known works--but if his writing was like his illustrating there must have been considerable pleasure in reading it. His artwork is graphic, full of cartoon-like exaggeration and humor, sometimes very grim humor indeed.

I regret not having seen La Colonia Lunare, Atlantide, and Viaggi e Avventure Attraverso il Tempo e lo Spazio; and failing to get Un Viaggio al Centro dell' Universe Invisible. (I have L'Atomo, which may be another form of the latter. Both are stories of a man and his dog who visited an atom.)

Gli Esploratori dell' Infinito tells of a tour of the solar system on an asteroid--as in Hector Servadac--with the addition of Mar-

giants and a group of villains. The latter did not escape the destruction of the body. Titie Tutu is after the style of The Cave Twins as it might be rewritten for the more nightmarish comic books. The Triad, Fortunato per Forza, Il Re dei Mondi, and La Banda di Carlo Bousset include an interplanetary sphere and a super-criminal. Il Manoscritto Trovato in Una Battaglia tells of a ship that went into a maelstrom and of an underground world where trees have octopus arms and stalked, globular eyes. Others of Yambo's with liberal fantastic touches include Il Libri della Bombe, Gli Eroi del "Gladiatore", Il Corsaro Giallo and Il Talismano delle 10,000 Disgrazie--to name a few.

Luigi Motta, a writer of boys' adventure stories, seems second to Yambo in output. Many of his books deal with "the son of Buffalo Bill". (There is a heavy strain of Wild West and Pelle-Rossi (Redskins) in the juvenile field.) Motta's sfantasy include three tales laid in the future: I Gigante dell' Infinito, La Battaglia dei Ciclopi, and L'Ombra dei Mari. Il Tunnel Sottomarino and L'Isola Ferro deal with a vehicular tunnel laid along the sea-bottom. Il Raggio Naufragatore deals with a ray able to wreck ships. I have eleven books by this author, all of them probably of low quality.

Cap. C. Ciancimino is a similar writer, and has co-authored books with Motta. His Come Si Ferma la Terra is set in AD 3000 when a war with Mars stops the earth's rotation. M. P. L. de Maria's Nei Vortice del 2000 is much less juvenile than most Italian science-fiction. As the title implies, it is a tale of the future. She also wrote I Fanciulli del 2000, but I was unable to locate a copy.

Older, and perhaps on a par with Jules Verne, is Ulisse Grifone. His Dalla Terra Alle Stelle and Nelle Stelle make use of an anti-gravity material.

Polar exploration used to be a science-fictional theme. "La Nave" has I Precursori del Polo along this line. The distant past is represented by Jagui e Fali by Davia Banfi Malaguzzi. Lost worlds: Remo Fuselli's L'Isola Senza Nome. Undersea civilizations: Il Peace Abitata by Manfredo Baccini and Jean de la Hire's Il Mostro d'Acciaio.

And Casanova, in time stolen from making his mark in a very different field, wrote a utopia! Written in French, it tells of the adventures of two English people among a pigmy race isolated from humanity; a race which had considerable advancement in many ways, and the specific ability to change their sex at will. Casanova died believing he had in reality invented the flying machine used in this story. I saw only the one set, five paper-bound volumes. Since the dealer asked 1200 lire and I had only 500 lire, he still has them.

The only major scientific theme I failed to find was that of time travel.

Other authors of interest include Mario Viscardini, Gastone Simone, Emilio Salgari (La Meraviglia del Duemila for one), Augusto Prestigiacomo (who had a short novel, Menace of the Metal-Men, translated in the first issue of Fantasy), Adolfo Guillotti (whose I Raggi della Morte seems to be the only recent story in the lot), and A. E. Butti. There are also a number of anonymous works.

The dearth of imaginative writing under Mussolini results in the use of few recent concepts. They have continued to reprint fantasy from the pre-flight era, illustrations and all. The aerodynamics portrayed or implied must be seen to be believed, while submarines far inferior to Nemo's "Nautilus" were still being used in stories written in the 1930's.

Italy at one time had a definite start in fantasy and science-fiction, but the weevils got into it and there is no new growth---merely stultification and decay.

## Dark Era

And in a flash of vision --  
Or was it that he remembered? --  
The Protozoan spoke of his children,  
Fruit of a million years.  
"They called themselves men," he said.  
"I call them Paradox.  
They were a shade lower than the angels.  
Wisdom was theirs to squander  
And oh! how scholarly, how ingenious  
Was their folly!"

"Make the world safe!" they shouted  
And threatened the world.  
'Peace! Peace!' they said and fought for it.  
'Peace!' -- and they did unthinkable deeds  
In the name of their God."

In time of the years two stood.  
All that was left from the West,  
Healthy and tall with hormones,  
Fit and well-formed with alphabet vitamins,  
Fired and struck before he fell,  
Coughing, curling  
In vapor swirling  
From that thrown by the beautiful hand  
Of all that was left from the East.

Well-planned, well-wrought, artistically done,  
Knowledge and strength and cunning fused,  
But no one was there to applaud. None  
There anywhere to see it at all,  
Except perhaps their God.  
And he was not amused.

"It's peaceful now," said the Protozoan.  
"Man, the hope of the world,  
Man, the vast mad experiment achieved his peace  
In the quick flame of holocaust,  
The slow fire of decay."

"Now," said the Protozoan,  
"The hope of the world is in me  
And the clean clay."

## \*\*\*\*\* CONQUÊTES *Harry Warner Jr*

News that Georges H. Gallet has safely survived the war, and plans to resume his efforts to found a professional science-fiction publication in France, makes logical at this time a description of Conquêtes, the only sf periodical known up to now in a language other than English.

The one issue of Conquêtes that appeared never reached news-stands, in France or anywhere else. However, a few copies of that "experimental" issue--which was complete in every detail--were sent to

Gallet's correspondents in America and England. To say that they are scarce would hardly be exaggerating matters; probably not more than a half-dozen exist in this country, and that many more in England.

Gallet himself is a reasonably young man who is widely travelled, a veteran of all sorts of experiences, and intensely interested in matters fantastic. He writes--and presumably speaks--excellent English, knows America pretty well, and planned to use this country as the source of much of the contents of Conquestes. Only one thing prevented the magazine from appearing as planned: the Second World War. That experimental issue, "Number 00", was dated August 24, 1939. A week later, Hitler marched into Poland; less than a year later, France had been conquered. Gallet, an officer in the French army, had fought, escaped across the channel from Dunkirk, gotten back to France, and managed to find a way for himself and his wife into southern, then unoccupied, France. Plans for Conquestes had to be abandoned, since the presses needed were in German hands. When Germany completed the occupation of France, all communication from Gallet was cut off, and he was heard from no more until May of this year.

Conquestes was intended by Gallet to sell to "an intelligent audience" of young men and women about 18 years old, according to the editor. "That is, it is the first attempt in a long while to build up a field in France for stf, that one has to begin slowly to accustom one's audience to quite a new climate," he wrote me. It must be understood that this publication was neither similar to the American prozine, nor merely a "popular science" publication of the old Gernsback Science and Invention type. It was somewhere between the two, approximating in general scheme the British boys' paper, Scoops, which Gallet may conceivably have used for a model.

The one and only issue consists of 16 pages, 13x9 1/2, half of them printed in two or more colors, on good magazine stock, neither "slick" nor "pulp". The cover was surprisingly conservative--merely a drawing of an airplane in flight over a landscape, completed with blurbs in the best American tradition for the stories and articles featured in the issue. Each copy bore also a rubber-stamped notation, "Numero experimental--confidentiel".

Two fantasy serials begin in this issue. One of them, entitled "Kilsona", turns out to be a translation of Festus Pragnell's "Green Men of Kilsona", which had already appeared in English as a serial in Wonder Stories, and in book form. The translation, by one Robert M. Zakovitch, was reasonably literal. The portion contained in this issue included the story, with a few minor deletions, up to the words "with what might have been a bow and a quiver of arrows on his back" on page 32 of the British edition in book form. There was a good illustration, and an editorial note which explained that "About nine years ago, the cover on an American fantastic adventure magazine attracted the attention of a London policeman on duty in Paddington.... A vocation was determined; Festus Pragnell was to become one of the leading writers of 'scientific fiction', as the Americans say."

The other serial was not a translation. The title was "Le Mystere de Radio-Zero", proclaimed to be a "great unpublished story of heroic adventures", by "Commander Cazal, author of 'War, War', 'Maginot-Siegfried', etc." The editor's note kept intelligent 18-year-old readers in the dark as to the identity of "Commander Cazal", calling him a "prudent person, shunning publicity, great talent as an author, fiery patriotism--that is Commander Cazal, whose heroic tales have an extraordinary popularity." The lengthy first chapter of this story described the manner in which the famed Captain Sarlatt was assigned to investigate a mysterious series of plane wrecks. The French "Service secret des Renseignements au Ministere de la Defense Nationale" had

learned that these wrecks were caused by a new Nazi invention. One of the crashed planes had supposedly contained a famous French scientist and his pretty daughter, but a French secret agent had communicated the information that they had been taken from the plane at its last stop before the crash, because the scientist was working on a new invention of his own. If Conquest reappears, perhaps we shall learn if Captain Sariatt rescued the scientist and his pretty daughter, and also further details about the secret radio apparatus concealed in the heel of the special shoe the professor wore on his club-foot.

Two more pages were given over to an article entitled "Plus Forts que Jules Verne" by "Arthenay". The most interesting part of this lies in the reproduction of five fine engravings illustrating scenes from Verne's novels, presumably taken from early editions. The article itself is a summary of the predictions in the Verne books that have come true, and a list of his more obvious scientific errors.

Popular science intruded in the remainder of the issue, in the form of a very dull article on the latest big French steamer (accompanied by a full-color, double-page spread), and a description of how Pasteur conquered a silkworm disease. The last page was devoted to brief notes on things scientific, entitled "From Here and There".

The brief editorial had a familiar ring to the hardened fan: "Don't hesitate to write us, telling your suggestions, asking the questions that interest you; we shall do the impossible..."

The magazine was to have been priced at one franc per issue, and to have appeared every Thursday.

It is not at all unlikely that Gallet will again attempt to give France a scientific magazine; in a recent letter to Forrest J Ackerman he spoke much as though active plans were afoot. At the moment, however, his chief publishing and writing ventures center around bringing up to date France's knowledge of Hollywood--telling of the new stars that have arisen, the old ones that have faded, and all the other gossip so dear to the movie addict's heart. But Gallet is still deeply interested in scientific fiction, and it is probable that this interest will sooner or later have concrete results.

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## *Grecian Rhapsody*

### A Fragment

There is a land beyond the distant sea  
That through the centuries seems calling me....

A land where many forest fountains play,  
And nymphs with laughing eyes peer through the spray;  
Where dryads yet are known to live in trees  
Beneath whose branches satyrs loll at ease.

Beside a pool, all gleaming white and fair,  
Artemis stands and combs her dusky hair.  
Around her dance her maidens; and one steals  
Away on eager feet unseen, and feels  
With rapture mortal arms about her close,  
And hears a shepherd's words of love, and knows  
A joy far greater in his young embrace  
Than any she has known upon the chase....

---Robert Avrett

In the Spring of 1935 I was making a library survey tour of the European continent. At the quaint little hill town of Orvieto, in Italy, I came upon an amazing mural high on the walls of the local Duomo or Cathedral. The painting represented mighty figures of ebony-hued men (not angels or demons) with great wings, flying through ethereal space carrying beateous pinionless mortals--men and women who were rapturously accompanying them in their voyage through eternity.

I photographed the scene and sent a print to Robert E. Howard, telling him it reminded me of one of his Conan stories. With the print I included a colored reproduction of a rare illuminated manuscript of the 10th Century which I had seen in the Royal Archives at Budapest. Howard, for some reason, sent this facsimile to Lovecraft, asking if he thought his Necronomicon would look anything like the reproduction of the parchment.

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Three months later, when I reached my home by the Presidio in San Francisco, I found awaiting me two letters from Howard and an extensive missive from Lovecraft. I was extremely pleased and surprised to hear from these masters of fantasy. Lovecraft inquired if I had another copy of the illuminated facsimile; then proceeded to give me his version of the history of the Necronomicon. The small and cryptic handwriting interested me considerably, but Lovecraft's statement to the effect that the Necronomicon was not in any way, shape, or form a thing of beauty stirred my imagination. Even the Egyptian Book of the Dead was a testimony to the bibliographical arts and accomplishments of the strange high-priests who produced it, no matter what immortal horror lay locked within its sheets.

Lovecraft said that the brightly colored and gilded manuscript was a far cry from what he had in mind; in fact, the Necronomicon was intended to be a tome of stark terror and diabolical utility. "The ultimate horror whose secrets would curdle and boil the seething organ of the brain in its bone-pot as its ghastly mysteries unfolded to the eyes of those who dared to read it." Incidentally, Howard claimed that the name Necronomicon was compounded from the words "Necro", meaning death; "nomi", meaning name; and "con", meaning with--literally, "With the Name of Death". It should be noted, however, that Lovecraft gave me a long explanation about the Necronomicon without thus defining the origin of his word.

Lovecraft asked me if I thought that San Francisco's Ambrose Bierce and George Sterling wrote stories under nom de plumes for pulp magazines. He ventured the suspicion that they did, because in certain fanciful stories he had read, he thought he clearly detected the imprint and character of their respective styles. ((So far as we know, Lovecraft was mistaken in this assumption. --FTL))

In my reply to HPL, I stated that I thought his opinion was well-founded, and furthermore that the references of both men to odd ancient gods were ideas they must have borrowed from Mayan, Toltec, and Aztec mythology. Such references, I suggested, were disguised from their original source by cloaking the identity of the gods in different environments and baptizing them with new names.

Lovecraft wrote promptly back to me and asked if I had much knowledge of the history and lore of the ancient Mayan, Toltec, and Aztec civilizations. He also asked if I harbored the thought that he might have gotten some of his ideas about gods from these same sources.

In my reply, I mentioned that I had studied first-hand the



cultures of the American aborigines of yesteryear, and that there were similarities between his gods and those of the early Mexican Indians. Lovecraft's next communication showed rare humor, and I got the impression that the Lovecraft Theology was a source of considerable amusement and secret mirth to him; also that anyone with any kind of imagination could invent any number of odd-gods and there would always be people willing and eager to believe in them. He seemed to be bubbling over with a deep Jovian inner laughter because supposedly intelligent readers of his tales took his gods for granted as real existing powers. I further sensed that his attitude was that Man "created god in his own image and likeness" to serve his own ends and purposes. I felt a sardonic impulse at play here, but one which with all its burden of tremendous knowledge faced the future with a courage and fortitude unmatched in my experience. Lovecraft, the "man who created the gods who created men"; was my instinctive thought as I gleaned his lines. Moreover, Lovecraft seemed to have pride in the fact he portrayed his gods so realistically that many of his credulous readers believed in them as implicitly and emphatically as a Fakir Fanatic. He said he had letters from people expressing overwhelming faith and fear with all the rabidity of frenzied zealots who considered him the high-priest of an archaic cult rescued in these latter years from the oblivion of doubt. But it was his Gargantuan sense of humor which led him to "feed the polacho fodder for their figments of the imagination".

Lovecraft put in a post-script asking me if I had any ideas or suggestions from my knowledge of the Mexican deities who would make suitable candidates for his pantheon. (Note. It might be mentioned as an aside that August Derleth, in The Trail of Cthulhu, applies the Aztec name of Huitzilopochtli to Cthulhu, and that much of this story centers around a Peruvian manifestation of Cthulhu and his minions.FTL))

I sent him several clay and jade figurines of Aztec and Mayan gods and godlings that I had gotten in Quintana Roo, Mexico; and some publications on the subject, including the splendid brochure put out by the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Then after a few moments contemplation, I sent him the following list of extremely Lovecraftian gods.

**Chiminig-Agua.** Aviolent deity and keeper of the Cosmic Light. Creator of the colossal Black Avians that distribute light about the Universe during the daytime and who gobbled it up every night.

**Cen-Teatl.** A gigantic, squat, frog-like female with a thousand udders, whose embrace was fatal to the Elder Gods and the Ghouls of the Aztec Lethe (World of Oblivion).

**Tonantzin.** Supreme Being in the form of an ever-sneering serpent whose long sinewy body coils about the entire firmament. The eggs she lays are solar orbs and planets. Cannibal-like, she devours her own children and hence is oft-times called "The Star-Eater".

**Camazotz.** Mayan vampire bat-god who flies into the reeking pits and caverns of the Abyssal Cesspools of Creation to drag forth the vile monstrous maggot life dwelling therein. He drops these revolting entities on planets whose inhabitants refuse to worship him. The maggot life-forms smother the fated orbs with their slime and spittle before sucking out the steaming, living viscera of the earth-bodies.

**Kinich-Kakimo.** Fiery visaged Lord of the Overworlds, whose chief duty is to hew out meteors from the mighty solar orbs in the Celestial Mansions. He also chops the tributary planets into form from great suns with his flint axe.

**Noh-Ek.** (Star-Killer) Who sets the stars dancing down the corridors of space and time to their doom in the charnal cellars of creation. As each star reaches the Portals of Mitla (or Cosmic Slaughterhouse) it is felled with a soul-shattering blow by Noh-Ek's brother.

The remains of the murdered stars are mixed with the ichor of fallen gods and served as fodder to the lost spirits of Omaoatl.

Tamoanacan. The god of the Waiting World or Abode of Descent where wait the souls of demons, outer world fiends, and hell-spawned effluvia. Tamoanacan secretly slips the souls of these hideous devils into the bodies of infants about to be born on earth. Once in human form they must remain bound to that body until they are freed by performing some noteworthy cosmic crime whose "evil effect can blot out the stars".

Tlau-Izcal-Pante-Cutli. Beauteous, sadistic, lustful, lecherous female voluptuary who purchased the Five Firmaments in order to find a supreme lover who could satiate her overwhelming passions. So far, all lovers have perished gallantly in the attempt. In vengeance and frustration she destroys the solar circuits of the planet from whence the failures sprang. She has frequently disguised herself as the newlywed bride of some brawny swain, usurping the place of his wife who is spirited away into the Starless Void beyond the Eternal. The groom is usually found with his life completely drained away, succubus-like. This goddess has been known to kidnap the entire male population of a planet, leaving the stricken womenfolk with a desolate, manless world. (Lovecraft thought this deific character would make the basis of a splendid Robert E. Howard story.)

Yum-Cimil. The Supreme Horror who steals the possessions, life-forces, and finally the soul of every sentient creature in the Universe. His head is the skull of a dead planet; his beard the entrails of the savage Quag-god; his eyes the living fires of hell; and his voice the agonizing cry of frightened thunder.

Lovecraft studied over the choice items carefully and said they were fertile with ideas he "might choose to use" but they were "crude and require a great deal of interpretation and modification". He said that he felt his own writings depicted man as the hapless victim of vast cosmic conspiracies, and that the suggested Mexican gods fitted in with this principle. He went on to venture the thought that Clark Ashton Smith would likewise be interested "because he wrote of man as the pre-destined tool of death", and assuredly the garish gods of the Aztecs bore out such a premise. He went on to declare that Catherine Moore wrote as "an incurable optimist rescuing man from an ill-omened fate by the means of a 'Star-destined fortune-favored' element; and that she would take over these old Mexican gods and dispose of them one by one through the valor, courage, and will power of her characters". He said she believed that the animal "man" had the undeniable ability to recover from the most hell-shattering catastrophe. The immortal potentialities of mankind, as she saw them, were too enormous a factor to be submerged or intimidated by mere "terror-gods". Such would make excellent straw-men for her heroes to vanquish.

Lovecraft finished his comparisons by asserting that "Robert Howard created men like gods and gods like men, with the men invincible conquerors over all the woe and misery the Powers of the Absolute could throw at them". He averred that Howard would find the Maya-Toltec-Aztec gods easy meat for his blood-lusting warriors, except that the divinities should have more sex-appeal to be worth his heroes' trouble in dispatching them! In the light of this basic philosophy of Howard's it was a titanic life-quake when the full shock of his passing struck his friends. Such a reversal of fundamental nature seemed unbelievable. So vital and dynamic a personality seemed eternal and immutable. He and Lovecraft were good friends and perhaps together they are exploring the infinite with the same zest and joyous spirit they possessed on the mundane sphere. They make a perfect pair of

## The Intruder

I think, as I sit here and write,  
That something has sneaked behind my back  
To read my words, something black,  
Evil, and a part of night.  
I will not turn, for I might see  
His face, and knowing what he is  
At last trade part of me for what is his.  
Perhaps it is my destiny  
To loose my grip on words and things,  
And travel down an easy stair,  
And step on carcasses thrown there  
That once walked by as kings  
Or clergymen or peers or saints,  
Who looked behind and caught the gleam  
Beneath his lids, and joined the team  
Of goodness that he kisses, taints,  
Divests each one, and lets each shell  
Tremble, giggle, and suddenly fall,  
When there is nothing there at all  
Of heaven, and everything of hell.

I have not turned, although his tongue  
Now seeks my neck. His breath is warm,  
Suggestive of internal storm  
Without the strength of thunder hung  
On every cloud to rumble, "Get  
Inside a house, under a stronger roof!"  
I have not turned. I am aloof.  
I have not turned....as yet.

--Margaret Staveloy

### \*\*\*\*\* INTERLUDE WITH LOVECRAFT. (cont.)

Immortals, each with his stupendous understanding of life, creation and the universe; each the complement of the other in realms and dimensions and planes undreamed.

I cannot but wonder if the Great God Lovecraft is now enthroned with the God of Gods, telling him chilling, enthralling tales of mankind and the demoniacal deeds of that dire, dread, planet-spawned, earthbound biped; telling him and his fellow gods the horrific, spine-freezing truth about the erratic mammal whose feet tread the earth but who betimes sends his soul voyaging through the starry vastness; tales of the two-legged mystery incarnate who caresses with one hand and kills with the other! Undoubtedly the gods find Lovecraft's sagas equally as exciting and intriguing as do his fellow men.  
\*\*\*\*\*

They

They come in dreams, these little ones.  
They live in black and twisted roots  
And rise against a spongy moon  
And play on timeless, phantom flutes.

They spread their thin and stringy arms.  
They clasp you close to crucify.  
And then you too shall be as they...  
The pale green ones who cannot die.

---Ruby Diehr

# THE SCIENTIFIC FICTIONAL HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

ELMER PERDUE

(Editorial Note. Under this heading The Acolyte will for the next several issues publish what is probably one of the most unusual items ever inspired by fantastic fiction. No reader of this phase of literature can have failed to notice that in many of the stories definite calendar dates are assigned to the fictitious happenings, and perhaps some readers have idly wondered if there might be any fortuitous coincidences, such as the million-to-one shot of an author prophesying a date accurately. It remained for Elmer Perdue, a long-time reader and collector of fantasy, to tabulate these dates and work them up into a connected and chronological outline. The Acolyte staff, like Mr. Perdue, is uninterested in the esoteric or metaphysical connotations of this "history". While it would no doubt be possible for a statistician to construct from it all manner of charts and tables "proving" or "disproving" about anything he wished, we feel that this compilation contains in itself sufficient interest to justify its publication.

The criteria for the listings have been simple. The event listed must have been dated in the future at the time the story was written. It must be of such nature as to be of general historical interest. A specific year-date must have been assigned to it.

A work of this nature can never be complete. In its present form, the Perdue "history" covers only the science-fiction published in pulp fantasy magazines from 1926 through the end of 1944, plus a very few books. Readers who are in a position to add to the work are urged to send in their notes for the addenda which we shall publish immediately following the completion of the history. This addenda will also include the years prior to 1945, which are being omitted at this time as being of secondary interest.

A minute fraction of this history was published by Mr. Perdue through the mailings of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. An article entitled The Incredible Years by Robert W. Lowndes appeared in The Fantasite for March-April 1943, covering the years 1939 and 1940 in a manner similar to what we have here. Otherwise, this is the first publication of such a compilation. --FTL.)

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS.

In the source references only the last two digits of the year are given, and the months are numbered consecutively. Thus, December 1934 would be abbreviated 12-34. In the case of quarterlies, the following abbreviations are used: Winter, w; Spring, sp; Summer, s; and fall, f. H. G. Wells' THINGS TO COME (MacMillan, 1933) is indicated by TC. Magazine titles are abbreviated as follows:

Az -- Amazing Stories	SF -- Science Fiction
As -- Astonishing Stories	SFQ -- Science Fiction Quarterly
A -- Astounding Science Fiction	S -- Startling Stories
CF -- Captain Future	St -- Stirring Science Stories
C -- Comet	Su -- Super-Science Stories
Co -- Cosmic Stories	T -- Tales of Wonder
D -- Dynamic Science Stories	U -- Uncanny Tales
FM -- Famous Fantastic Mysteries	Uk -- Unknown Worlds
FA -- Fantastic Adventures	WT -- Weird Tales
FN -- Fantastic Novels	W -- Wonder Stories
F -- Fantasy	SW -- Science Wonder Stories
Fu -- Future Fiction	AW -- Air Wonder Stories
M -- Marvel Science Stories	TW -- Thrilling Wonder Stories
P -- Planet Stories	Q -- Quarterly /ies

January. Astronomer John Wingate of Kingaley Observatory sees changes and light flashes in the crater of Archimedes on the Moon.

MARTIAN GUNS, Stanley D. Bell, Fu-4-41

January. European situation tense, but no war.

ANANIAS, L. Sprague de Camp, D-4,5-39

January. No war. THE TALK OF THE TOWN, New Yorker, 4-6-35

January 28. Cold wave. Riots in Oslo and London. German government makes a friendly gesture to France re the Polish Corridor; France reciprocates with an indulgent note on the Saar payments. Russian protests are ignored.

SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az, 4-37

February 2. The first of a series of German prisoners of war is smuggled from the prison camps into the Department of Longevity in the laboratories of Ivanoff, Soviet Russia.

THE DEVIL'S PIGS, Don Wilcox, FA, 1-45

February. Left-wing Congressman proposes that each American family be required to adopt two European families. Another recommends unlimited immigration, with mandatory sterilization for all in excess of quota. Alaska is now a state. Record-breaking munitions appropriations. International incident when the Minister from France stalks from party because the hostess permits dance orchestra to play the Gulf Stream Blues. Battle front forms between Russia and Hungary. Africa and Australia receive undreamed of stream of immigrants.

SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az, 4-37

February. An average of 3000 planes per day land at LaGuardia Field.

TROG, Murray Leinster, A, 6-44

February. Beginning of economic depression.

TELEPATHY IS NEWS, Paul Edmonds, SF, 6-39

February. Increase in economic hardships: looted stores, armed guard service on foodstuff shipments. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse ride over Earth. War in the Balkans, war between China and Japan, communist revolution in Germany, revolt of the farmers in Russia. Greatly strengthened censorship on Italian news indicates internal unrest. World-wide famine.

WHEN THE TOP WOBBLED, Victor Endersby, Az, 2-36

February. Transformation of US Highway 66, running from Chicago to Los Angeles into a superhighway; its use permitted only to vehicles going 60 miles per hour or over.

THE ROADS MUST ROLL, Robert Heinlein, A, 6-40

February. Small republics have isolated themselves in the United States, governed by any one of a number of ideologies. For example, Utah is a single-tax state, with the original type Mormonism as the State religion. TC p. 235

February 21. Diplomatic note from Holland, given to the press, requests a complete transfer of population.

SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az, 4-37

February. Launching of the submarine S-98.

SEAS OF THE BLEST, F.A. Kummer, Jr., Fu, 3-40

February. Earth discovers the anti-gravity force.

THE TEACHER FROM MARS, Eando Binder, TW, 2-41

February. Epidemic of cholera.

TC, p. 206

March 1. Almost continuous, world-wide earthquakes; the usual scenes of mob violence and terror, coupled with numerous end-of-the-world cults.

WHEN THE TOP WOBBLED, Victor Endersby, Az, 2-36

March 4. Marion Hally, daughter Herbert H., sportsman and artist of NYC, disappears while on vacation in Rio de Janeiro. Abductor seems to be winged.

MEN WITH WINGS, Leslie Stone, AW, 7-29

- March 11. Thermometer drops to 28 below in London. International amity between Japan and the United States.  
SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az, 4-37
- March. Beginning of the Era of Non-Intercourse. (Historians' term for the hiatus in trade and in protocol between the US and Asiatics.  
SIXTH COLUMN, Anson MacDonald, A, 3-41
- March 17. Miss Hilda Berkenhart of NY disappears in Quito, Equador; abducted by a man with wings.  
MEN WITH WINGS, Leslie Stone, AW 7-29
- March 19. A terrific shift in the rotational axis of the earth that carries California to near-arctic latitudes, while accompanying earthquakes well-nigh obliterate Man and his works.  
WHEN THE TOP WOBBLED, Victor Endersby, Az 3-36
- March 31. Europe is shivering in the cold that followed the southward deflection of the Gulf Stream, shivering and threatening war. And on this date America the philanthropic begins to rebuild the ridge that had formerly warmed Europe...  
SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az 4-37
- March. Perfection of the production of power from atomic energy.  
THE MYSTERY OF SHAFT 13, R.M. Williams, FA 7-42
- April 5. Miss Elizabeth Moray, school-teacher on holiday, abducted by flying man from air-liner Quitoria.  
MEN WITH WINGS, Leslie Stone, AW 7-29
- April. A Mrs. Margaret Harmon leaves Reno, alone in an airplane, after having secured her divorce, and is never heard from again.  
THE PHYTIC EMPIRE, Derald S. Walker, Az 6-35
- Early 1945. Gasoline engined vehicles are forbidden use of the streets in all cities, a move intended to stop the increase in the number of cases of carbon-monoxide poisoning.  
COSMIC POWER, John C. Dare, Az 4-31
- Early 1945. World-wide war, no man left old or wise enough to take the responsibility of absolute dictatorship. In this year a woman, Dunya Franklin, is proclaimed supreme ruler of United States of Earth.  
WOMEN'S WORLD, David C. Cooke, SF 12-39
- May 12. A sun explodes in Messier 33, and a beam of green radiation flares across space from it, striking New York. New York is gone, collapsed into infinite smallness; and the Moon is gone with it.  
NOVA IN MESSIER 33, Chan Corbett, A 5-37
- May. War between the United States and the Yellow Girdle (an expanded Japan by internal evidence). 50,000,000 men land on US west coast in a submarine sneak attack; two days later they have obliterated all west of the continental divide and are hammering at the Rockies. Daryl Strang, 25 years old, made C1C of Army, youngest 4-star man in history.  
JASON SOWS AGAIN, Arthur J. Burke, A 3-38
- May. Hitler defeated, Europe liberated, and an International Tribunal established.  
THE AVENGERS, Wm. P. McGivern, Az 6-42
- June. War declared on the United States by the United Asiatic nations. First attack is on San Francisco, followed in a few hours by an attack on the Panama Canal. Weapon: poison gas from helicopter (for accuracy) type bombers. 50,000 deaths in Frisco in first half-hour. US given two days to meet peace terms. President, Burton; Secy of War, Roger L. Bates.  
THE SINGING WEAPON, Ben Prout, Az 5-27
- June. War debts repaid (from World War I).  
SHIFTING SEAS, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Az 4-37
- June. Increase in personal insecurity. Mention is made of unsafe roadside hotels, and of districts and villages where people disappear, and it is unsafe for strangers.  
TC p.142



June 17. Baby dinosaur appears in Times Square. Ulysses wins the Winterton Cup Race. Cleopatra wins a beauty contest. Shakespeare returns, and George Washington. Sir Galahad murders mobster. /42

June. THE CASE OF THE BABY DINOSAUR, J.S.Klimaris, Fu 10-  
Unknown girl, suspected insane, found in Central Park; taken to Turber Hospital on Staten Island, private sanitarium of Dr. Turber, prominent private physician.

June. THE SHADOW GIRL, Ray Cummings, SFQ #6  
All civil hospitals and private doctors have disappeared from the world. TC, p.47

June 20. George Alden and Roy Somers, attendants at Pontoon Four of the trans-Atlantic route, are missing.

June 23. ELIXIR OF DOOM, Ray Cummings, TW 4-37  
Discovery of wonder-stuff Plasticene, new material that lends itself admirably to a new technology of prefabrication. Any element or compound may be transformed into Plasticene at the cost of a mass loss of 90%. THE DWINDLING SPHERE, Willard E. Hawkins, A 3-40

June 27. Departure of the Haverfield moon rocket, the Astronaut, from an Arizona plain near Brewster.

July 20. THE MOON CONQUERORS, R. H. Romans, SFQ #1  
Wreck of the Astronaut seen on the moon, near a huge rock. Fears expressed for the safety of the earth-moon voyagers. IBID.

July 21. A huge sphere is seen from Earth to approach the wreck of the Astronaut, and to destroy it with a heat ray. Hope for the safety of the five voyagers given up. IBID (also in SWQ w30)

July 25. Warfare between the men of Earth and the winged men of Mentor. Mentor victorious.

August. MEN WITH WINGS, Leslie Stone, AW 7-29  
World War II is over; a devastated London is to be rebuilt. Quarrel among three factions: the Ups, who want a modernistic, skyscraper London; the Downs, seeking safety by eschewing surface beauty for the bombproof underground; and the Outs, wishing large parks and a city where buildings don't have to appear squeezed in with a shoe horn. Quarrel settled by Ben Glead, American efficiency expert, after he inadvertently throws London and vicinity into hysterical fear.

August. THE FIEND OF NEW LONDON, Don Wilcox, Az 3-42  
Moving stairways replace San Francisco's outmoded cable cars.

August. THE ROADS MUST ROLL, Robert Heinlein, A 6-40  
Establishment of a dot-dash code in communication between Earth and Mars. Beginning of attempts to set up intelligible communication.

Summer. THE MOON MAIN, Edgar Rice Burroughs, 1936.  
Larry Stenson invents time machine. At this time Atlantic crossing takes 18 hours in an air liner.

September. THE TIME ANNIHILATOR, Manley and Thode, W 11-30  
Josef Kelinev, violinist, turns his invention over to the government; work on it is started immediately. US fighting a losing war with United Asiatic Nations.

September. THE SINGING DEATH, Ben Prout, Az 5-27  
The surface of Earth is coated with an immeasurably thick sheath of ice; and man-kind has become accustomed to life in the caves between Earth and ice-sky.

September. WINTER ON THE PLANET, Warner van Lorne, A 4-37  
Dr. Ira Waldron of the NY Technological Society discovers life-rays from ekauranium; works them over until he is able to revive dead animals, provided that the period of temporary death does not exceed seven minutes and twenty-one seconds. Process tested on dead man on World War II battlefield.

THE TEST-TUBE GIRL, Frank Patton, Az 1-42

October. Astronomer Paul Ferrand returns from Cape Town with pictures showing a spreading darkness in the constellation Octans. Leland Drake has just won the Nobel physics award with his matter-energy tensors. The world is warned; the darkness is coming.

THE SUN MAKER, Jack Williamson, TW 6-40

October. Beginning of the war of extermination. Exact lineup unknown, but including the United States, England, and Germany among the nations united against the unspecified nations comprising the Asiatics.

THE COLLOIDAL NEMESIS, Harl Vincent, Az 13-29

October. Founding of Long Island City for use as a residence for employees of the World Government, which is to be established in NYC.

ENSLAVED BRAINS, Eando Binder, W 8-34

November. "Three times the foreign legions of France and England...had been hurled against Moscow in vanguard attack. Three times they had been repulsed, each time with terrible losses.

PALADINS OF THE SKY, Warwick Janus, Azq f-31

December. War between France, England and Germany against the United States of Soviet Russia. The Chinese nations join the Soviet in military alliance. Late in the month, revolt of India against England and alliance of India with Soviet Russia. IBID.

December 14. A huge oval of livid violet light materialises on the plains of Indiana, near Seton, and remains. State militia called up to preserve order.

THE MEN FROM GAYLN, E. Mantell, W 8-34

(No month references for the following entries.)

Holocaust. United States attacked by Japan and by Germany from Nazi-controlled Mexico. One friendly Western nation: Argentina. Aerial attack on Detroit, New York, Chicago, Washington, and Pittsburg. Paratroops invade Indianapolis, Springfield (Ill.), St. Louis, and Des Moines. Statue of Liberty is casualty of war, from attack by submarine that disregards mine fields. About ten days after beginning of war, earthquake levels New York and a rift in magnitude comparable to the Grand Canyon appears centered along what used to be 5th Ave.

GRAND CANYON, V. Sackville West, Doubleday Doran '42

Census of the United States in 1945 gives population of 90,000,000.

THE LAST AMERICAN, J.A. Mitchell, Stokes, NY, 1889

Invading armies of England, Germany and France routed by Russia.

PALADINS OF THE SKY, Warwick Janus, Azq f-31

Space travel? Space suits exist. "...his new space suit, a decided improvement over the old suit of 1945, which never was a success, and which was used for deep sea divers' work." /Azq f-31

THE WAR OF THE UNIVERSE, Clinton Constantinesque

Adolph Hitler and six other Nazi defendants tried on the plain charge of murder. No other data available in book review, New Yorker 6-12-43.

THE DAY OF RECKONING, Max Radin.

"We survived the plague of hunger following the second world war back in 1945..." "The ten-year war was horrible enough on the world."

End presumably in 1955; combatants unknown.

SEVEN SECONDS OF ETERNITY, R.H. Leiffred, WT 9-40

"Adolf Hitler will die today; the Yankees and the British will conclude a separate peace with Germany and will concentrate their attacks on the Greater East Asia Prosperity Sphere."

PELAGIC SPARK, Anthony Boucher, A 6-43

Finland wins the Davis cup, using the physical culture methods developed by one J. Orestes Jones, vaudeville strong man. /1938

GENERAL MANPOWER, John S. Martin, Simon & Schuster,

"...and after the second World War in 1945, more than half the population of Earth died in the terrible 'Famine Disease'."

HUNTER OF THE KING PLANET, Carl Selwyn, TW 8-43

1945 cont.

January 10. The world comes to an end. No further details. Prophecy.  
IS THIS THE NIGHT? Alexander Blade, Az 3-45

1946

January. Russia, India, and China become victorious in engagement with France, England, and Germany. Invading armies of European powers begin retreat from Russia.

PALADINS OF THE SKY, Warwick Janus, AzQ f-31

February 2. Eighty German prisoners of war have been secretly transferred to the Longevity Dept. of the Ivanoff Laboratories in Soviet Russia. Four of them have died; 76 now living.

THE DEVIL'S PIGS, Don Wilcox, FA 1-45

February. A visitant from another dimension shows up at Otter Creek, a short distance from Rutland, Vermont. Intangibility and indifference to things of Earth cause it to be considered a ghost; approximately a thousand come to gawk.

INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, Ray Cummings, SFQ #5

February 18. Return of Ralph Prescott and Margaret Sprague from Venus; the first interplanetary flight has been successful each way. He is head of the Prescott chain of department stores. Space flyer built by one John Sorenson. Four Venerians included in passenger list.

FASTER THAN LIGHT, Harl Vincent, AzQ f-w-32

February. Evacuation of Berlin, brought about by the threat of Yellow Cross bombs.

TC p.159

Early March. Another extra-dimensional visitant appears about 100 feet in midair, near the Boro Badur in Java. While thousands watch, two other ghosts appear, and the three appear to chat together for awhile before walking away.

INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, Ray Cummings, SFQ #5

The Rawlins expedition to Antarctica discovers a race of gigantic semi-anthropomorphic beings, partly squamous and partly rugose. The arrival of the exploring party widens their mental horizons; they escape their mountain-rimmed valley and head northward.

THE WALL OF DEATH, Victor Rousseau, A 10-30

Pay of the Army raised, its size increased, and its intelligence service expanded to create a private gestapo for Steel Jeffers, president US.

REVOLUTION OF 1950, Weinbaum and Farley, Az 10-38

April. The New York-Paris Airways Inc. manufactures and sells airships, in addition to making regular trans-Atlantic flights. Intrigue between the Buddhist forces and the Occidentals. Discovery of atomic energy.

THE YELLOW AIR-PERIL, Harl Vincent, AW 9-29

March-April. Ghosts reported from Nome, Capetown, "everywhere".

INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, Ray Cummings, SFQ #5

May. Unprecedented newspaper interest in the ghosts; psychical research societies become talkative. Near hysteria as imaginary apparitions are seen. Wave of spiritualism. IBID.

May. War has ended; demobilization occurring now.

CITY, Clifford D. Simak, A 5-44

May. Mangar and Kane discover the Mangar deep in the South Pacific, 10 miles below sea level.

THE GREEN GIRL, Jack Williamson, Az 3-30

June. Chicago messed up. Captain Kelly of the police force killed by man from three million years futureward. Two dinosaurs, one carnivorous and one herbivorous, appear on the streets, their origin traced to the Emerson Laboratory.

THE INFINITE INVASION, E. K. Jarvis, FA 9-42

Spring. U. S. S. Alaska (a space cruiser) undergoes battle efficiency inspection.

ADMIRAL'S INSPECTION, Malcolm Jameson, A-40

Professor Johann Haupt, president of the Clique of Science with headquarters at Vienna, secludes himself from the world and makes his home high in the Tyrol mountains.

EIGHTY-FIVE AND EIGHTY-SEVEN, Binder, Az 10-34

1946 cont.

July. Government of England gives a monetary grant to one William Grant to carry on rocket experiments.

SATELLITE OF DEATH, L. D. Johnson, T #3

Late July. Four men attacked by several so-called ghosts, ponderable this time. Young girl in Kansas dies of heart attack during bed-chamber molestation by "ghost".

INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, Ray Cummings, SFQ #5  
Finley McGrath, globe-trotter and photographer, discovers the almost complete fossil skeleton of an immature male creature now known as the Uganda man, Australopithecus Ugandensis.

ISLE OF THE GOLDEN SWARM, Norman L. Knight, A 6-38  
August 3. Astrophysicist Eric Vane kidnapped from his home, Pittsburgh.

THE LUNAR CONSUL, Sidney Patzer, W 11-33

August 4. Biochemist of University of Chicago is abducted. IBID.

August 5. Math professor L. R. Manning of Pasadena Institute of Technology, and Physics professor Warren Schulte of the University of Washington are kidnapped. IBID.

August. New York attacked by army of "ghosts". Architectural casualties before Earth wins in a curious manner include: Woolworth building, the Statue of Liberty, the Brooklyn Bridge, unknown warship, and Fort Wadsworth.

INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, Ray Cummings, SFQ #5  
September. Philavox society deposits phonograph and records in Metropolitan Opera House vault.

THE AFTERGLOW, George Allan England, FM 12-41

Youth secretly builds spaceship, external-impetus type, and is sent Moonward. He is unsuccessful; he and his vessel are destroyed while still in the atmosphere.

EXTRA-GALACTIC INVADERS, J. Schlossel, AzQ a-31  
Ambassadors of the British Empire, as a classification, abolished in this year; replaced by "consolidated consuls". TC p.235  
European situation tense, but no war.

ANANIAS. L. Sprague de Camp, D 4,5-39

No war.

THE TALK OF THE TOWN, New Yorker, 4-6-35

December. Guard in the Longevity Department, Ivanoff Laboratories, Soviet Russia, bitten by one of the 76 prisoners. Infection results.

THE DEVIL'S PIGS, Don Wilcox, FA 1-45

1947

January. At the first full moon, world astounded to find, deeply engraved on its surface, the sign: "FEB1/1947".

THE LUNAR CONSUL, Sidney Patzer, W 11-33

February 1. Entire supply of gold in the world has turned to lead. IBID.

February 2. Allied War Council has given approval of plan to use the 76 prisoners as guinea pigs in longevity research. Women scientists have been barred from the grounds, and it has been agreed not to tell the public. THE DEVIL'S PIGS, Don Wilcox, FA, 1-45

February 3. Voice from the radio, covering all broadcast bands, announces desire to change the world for the better; and announces that it doesn't wish to prove severe, but will if necessary.

THE LUNAR CONSUL, Sidney Patzer, W 11-33

February 5. Bloody street battles in Chicago. Bomb explosion in Wall Street kills 78 persons. Earthquake strikes Honshu island, Japan. Hitler proclaims martial law in Germany. Island of Kyushu and Shikoku, Japan, with 20,000,000 inhabitants struck by earthquakes, and practically all killed. IBID.

The University of Sun Yat-Sen is established in New Hankow in this year.

THE PURPLE PLAGUE, Russell Hays, Az 2-31

No war.

ANANIAS, L. Sprague de Camp, D 3,4-39

- February 23. Departure of Mr. & Mrs. Prescott, of the Prescott chain of department stores, for Venus, first leg of a journey whose destination is interstellar. One interplanetary ship in service; the Neptunia, built to carry 300 passengers per trip and averaging but thirty. Idea of interplanetary travel hasn't caught on so well, it would appear...
- March 31. Spaceship Flame takes off from Earth for the moon.  
FASTER THAN LIGHT, Harl Vincent, AzQ f-w-32  
MARTIAN GUNS, Stanley D. Bell, Fu 4-41
- April 5. The night the waveries came. Recent reduction in the size of the armies of occupation. Boom years from reconversion. Radio reception badly impaired by untraceable dit-dit-dit signals, origin unknown.  
THE WAVERIES, Frederic Brown, A 1-45
- April 6. Last night's bad (and continuing bad) reception is traced to outer space. IBID.
- April 7. End of electric power; all electrical items cease to function. (Later found due to entities from outer space who had blanketed the earth and ate all electrical impulses as fast as generated.) IBID
- April 15. Shell strikes Pacific Ocean near Hawaii. No harm done. Another lands in the bay off Hongkong, crushing and firing hundreds of ships at anchor there. Third shell lands on the Siberian steppes. Shells appear to come from the Moon.  
MARTIAN GUNS, Stanley D. Bell, Fu 4-41
- April 18. Shell from the Moon lands in Valparaiso, Chile. Hundreds die in the explosion, and a fire kills hundreds more. IBID.
- May. 35,000,000 employables are out of work.  
THE WAVERIES, Frederic Brown, A 1-45
- May. "Detroit lay a mass of ruins. New York had been grazed; Bordeaux counted a thousand dead, and Manila was set aflame..."  
MARTIAN GUNS, Stanley D. Bell, Fu 4-41
- May. Inventor Stephen Waterson develops atomic energy, and going beyond that, releases the energy of matter. Invasion of Earth by the Martians. Hundreds of thousands die in panics in the cities. San Francisco destroyed. Earth victorious this month.  
WHEN THE ATOMS FAILED, John W. Campbell, Jr. Az 1-30
- June 7. Headlines from New York Times for this date: PRESIDENT CALLS ON NATION FOR NEW INDUSTRIAL EFFORT; Two Hundred Billion Dollar National Income Only Beginning, He Says. GERMANY RECOVERING SWIFTLY UNDER UNITED NATIONS PLAN; Shaposhenko Punishment for Leaders Having Rejuvenating Effect on People, Occupation Authorities State. 350,000 FAMILY PLANES SOLD FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF 1947. IS THERE LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS? Expect 300 Inch Telescope To Provide New Evidence--To Be Completed Next Year.
- June 10. First seeds strike earth from the tail of a comet designated 1947, IV. Meteors of about the size of baseballs. Their uniform size and orange color causes widespread belief they are seeds.  
SPAWN OF THE COMET, H. Thompson Rich, A 11-31
- Early Summer. Scientist Dwight disappears under mysterious circumstances from his laboratory north of Gallup, New Mexico. Blaze burns all evidence at laboratory; about a thousand dollar's worth of platinum recovered from lab ashes.  
THE PHYTIC EMPIRE, Derald S. Walker, Az 6-35
- June. Successful attack on the Martian gun emplacement on Moon by the forces of Earth. MARTIAN GUNS, Stanley D. Bell, Fu 4-41
- July 17. A gigantic planet, fully the size of the Sun, appears close to the solar system.  
THE EXPEDITION FROM KYTLM, M.F. James, A 12-36

**FANTASY RACKETEERS.** The remarks last time anent exorbitant prices charged by a certain fan dealer met with strong approbation. If you folks will cooperate with us, we'll gladly use an unlimited amount of space to list specific examples--with the culprit's full name and address. Obviously, any such mention would not only have to be true, but actually provable in court. For us to publish the full details of exorbitant fantasy prices, we will require for our own protection, an original copy of the quotation in question for our files: either a printed or mimeographed catalog or price list, or a signed letter from the extortioner with the quotation contained in it. No such material sent to us will be returned to its sender.

A legal point or so might prove of interest. In the event that an item quoted is out-of-print and a case can be made that value has accrued to it as a collectors' or antiquarian object, we cannot publish the name of the person selling it, regardless of how outrageous his price might be. If we did, he could sue us for libel, since he could claim we were making a malicious attempt to damage his business. If, however, we omitted any positive identification of the dealer, we would be at full liberty to discuss his prices, and warn prospective buyers that they were out of line. On the other hand, in offering material still available from the publishers, dealers had best quote it at cost price plus a reasonable commission; unless they wish to be the subject of a business damaging paragraph. With the widespread confusion in OPA, mere amateur publishers could scarcely be expected to know about price ceilings as applying to fantasy material; however, it is highly probable that general OPA regulations on the sale of second-hand goods would apply to any second-hand books or magazines. (And a book or magazine, even if new, if bought at retail and resold is technically "second-hand".) If we remember correctly, these provide a sliding scale, depending on age and condition, which in no case exceeds 75% of the original "new" retail price. Be all this as it may, such prices as we mentioned last time are certainly contrary to the spirit of OPA, and the quoter of same (whom we'd gladly name in this column if someone would give us a copy of his list) is in the same category as any other black market racketeer. He has certainly forfeited any claim to the esteem and friendship of honest hobbyists.

In our editorial this time (P.2) will be found a few remarks on fan dealers and the definite value of the service they render. We do not wish to convey the false impression that we disapprove of fans who run a small fantasy business on the side. All we disapprove of (and "disapprove" is an understatement!) is such persons who abuse their position.

R. D. Swisher tells us that a well known library service lists something they call "Weird Shadow Over Innsmouth" at \$3.75. From the title, this is the still current (on LA stands at least) Bart 35¢ edition, since the book edition of 1936 did not have a "weird" in the title. The same concern offers 1944 Amazing and Astounding at \$1.50 per copy, as compared to local magazine store prices of 5¢ to 10¢ each. Send us their list, Doc, and we'll blazon their name as a warning.

---ooOoo---

**THE BIZARRE SERIES.** We'll start the actual chatter about books this time with a plug for some stuff that's been around so long that most fans think it's out of print. A few years ago, Richard Frank published three neat little brochures: Merritt's Three Lines of Old French, Keller's The Thing in the Cellar, and Binder's The Cancer Machine. The first named is out of print, and its publish-



or tells us it sells in New York bookshops for \$1.50. The latter two, however, are still available at their publication price of 25¢ each. Handsomely set-up and printed, both are recommended, particularly the Keller item. Most copies are autographed by the author. Postfree at 25¢ each from Richard Frank, 342 Susquehanna Street, Williamsport 15, Pennsylvania.

----ooOoo----  
DERLETH'S SECOND ANTHOLOGY.

Most recently published Arkham House book, August Derleth's Something Near proves to be a worthy, if not outstanding, addition to the Arkham series. Though not of the same spectacular quality as the two Smith volumes or the Wandrei, Something Near contains twenty weird shorts and novellas which range from good to excellent. Derleth is a thoroughly competent craftsman, and his better efforts in the genre are well deserving of hard covers. Recommended. \$3.00 postpaid from Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin. (Further information on Arkham House will be found in Fantasy Forum.)

----ooOoo----  
DeFOE IN PENGUIN.

Though it came out last January, your editor just discovered Penguin Book #554: Daniel DeFoe, Tales of Piracy, Crime, and Ghosts. This includes not only the well-known "Apparition of Mrs. Veal", but a wealth of other weird shorts, many of them making their first appearance in print since the 18th Century. At 25¢ it's a steal! At your newstand, or from Penguin Books, New York City. (Will some reader please give us Penguin's full address for future use in this column?)

----ooOoo----  
A "PHANTOM" MYSTERY.

The house name of this pocketbook is no understatement, since the volume contains no data on the publisher, save that it was printed in the USA! In any event, this recent edition of H. H. Holmes' (Anthony Boucher) hoodunnit, Rocket to the Morgue, should be mentioned here as an associational item, if for no other reason. It is a fast-paced murder mystery containing a large number of science-fiction fans and authors as leading characters. Such writers as Heinlein and Cartmill, and several members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society were used as source material for the characterizations. 25¢, and it may still be at your newsstand.

----ooOoo----  
DONOVAN'S BRAIN.

This stirring novel by Curt Siodmak is now available in Mercury Mysteries. Dealing with an illegal experiment with the brain of a dying man, and the obscene life and power eventually developed by the brain in its glass culture vat, the story reaches an enviable height of weird horror. Highly recommended. Mercury Book No. 87. 25¢ from your newstand, or from The American Mercury Inc., 570 Lexington Ave., New York City 22.

----ooOoo----  
CHARLES WILLIAMS.

It came as a pleasant surprise to your editor to learn that Charles Williams, the gifted British author of such masterpieces as Many Dimensions and The Place of the Lion, is again actively writing fantasy. His latest (published in March 1945) is All Hallows Eve, a story of London as seen by the souls of the dead, of the attempt of a magical adept to seize control over both this world of spirits and of our mundane civilization, and of how the attempt is thwarted by the collaboration of two young women, one dead and one living. It is tremendously powerful and well-done. 8/6 (about \$2) from Faber & Faber, 24 Russell Square, London. (On the jacket is also mentioned another recent novel which we have not seen: Williams' Descent Into Hell. It is probably available from the same publisher.)